

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

At page 1, lines 10-23, replace the existing paragraph with the following paragraph:

Obesity is an excess of body fat usually due to changes of physiological or biochemical function and is a significant impairment of health. Fat usually contains neutral lipids, phospholipids and cholesterol. Weight gain is dependent on a person's energy intake being greater than energy expenditure. There are two types of obesity: (a) simple obesity, and (b) ~~second~~ secondary obesity. Simple obesity is divided into idiopathic obesity and acquired obesity; the latter accounts for more 95 % of obesity. Idiopathic obesity results from a large number of fat cell, and is usually found in childhood obesity. Acquired obesity results from a larger size of fat cell, and is usually found in adult obesity. Secondary obesity is known as symptomatic obesity, usually results from endocrine or metabolic diseases. Obesity ~~would be~~ is associated with several chronic diseases, such as diabetes mellitus, cardiopathy, hypertension, apoplexy, biliary calculus, gout, and some carcinomas.

At page 1, line 24 to page 2, line 6, replace the existing paragraph with the following paragraph:

There are five strategies for treating obesity: diet, exercise, behavioral ~~behavior~~ treatment, drug treatment, and therapeutic operation. The strategies are chosen or combined to treat an obesity patient depending on the patient's ~~danger~~ risk factors in health, and the rate and effect of losing weight, which are influenced by multiple factors such as age ~~ages~~, standing height, family history, and ~~danger~~ risk factors. The mechanisms of drug treatment include inhibiting appetite, increasing energy expenditure, stimulating fat movement, lowering triacylglycerol synthesis, and inhibiting fat absorption. Examples of these drugs are phenylpropanolamine (PPA), orlistat (XenicalTM), and sibutramine (ReductilTM). However, it is a new trend to treat obesity with a natural substance, not a drug.

At page 5, lines 25-26, replace the existing paragraph with the following paragraph:

The ~~mycological~~ microbiological characteristics of the *Lactobacillus rhamnosus* GM-020 are shown below:

At page 19, line 24 to page 20, line 11, replace the existing three paragraphs with the following paragraphs:

It is found in the invention that the strain GM-020 in combination with *Auricularia polytricha* (wood ear) provides a dramatic effect in treating obesity, compared with wood ear or the strain GM-020 solely.

Auricularia auricula, known as wood ear, tree ear, ~~and~~ etc., is a rubbery flavorless edible fungus. It is closely relative to *Auricularia polytricha* cultivated in Asia, and has been consumed for a long time. *Auricularia auricula* is found to grow in wild on conifers and sometimes on deciduous wood in both spring and fall seasons. Wood ear is usually dried for the preparation as food. When eating the dried wood ear, the edible fibers extend about 8 to 10 times after absorbing water. The consumer feels full and reduces eating. Furthermore, polysaccharides in wood ear were reported to have an effect in lowering the serum concentration of total cholesterol in rabbits.

In one experiment according to the invention, the body weight of the obesity animal model with a treatment with the combination of wood ear and GM-020 was reduced; ~~to the contrary~~ in contrast, the administration of wood ear or GM-020 solely can inhibit body weight gain only.